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## The Student / Apprentice, Vol. 1, No. 4, March, 1980

DIT Bolton Street Students' Union

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# THE STUDENT/APPRENTICE

Newspaper of Bolton St. Student's Union

Vol.1. No. 4 Mar. '80

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## CONGRESS — SPECIAL

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5,6&7





## S.U. Activity

# OCCUPATION

## The Aftermath

It is now three weeks since the occupation of the Administration in protest at bad Canteen and Library facilities ended.

What have been the results? Well, there has been a slight (very slight) improvement in the quality of the food and students were greeted on morning with the encouraging sight of clean chairs. Hygiene in general has been improved. It is our view, however, that major improvements will not be possible until there has been a complete review of the operation as envisaged by obtaining the services of the promised Catering Consultant (mentioned in Mr. O'Donnell's letter).

A meeting was held last week between the Principal, the Students' Union President and the Communications officer. The issue of the Catering

## Principal's Letter

14th February, 1980

Mr. Brendan Doris,  
President,  
Students Union.

Dear Mr. Doris,

In reply to your letter of today's date I wish to assure you again that the points you raise will be dealt with on the lines set out in my letter of 5 February.

The Canteen Manageress has now taken up duty, following the interviews held last December for the filling of this position. The Longford House Canteen service has now been opened. I expect that the Catering Consultant, whose services the College has obtained, will visit us shortly. His report to the College will naturally also be given to the Canteen Committee, of which you are a member. The committee will continue to be involved with the general operation of the Canteen and recommend on the acquisition of any equipment required. As is the practice, the College will support any reason-

able recommendations of this kind.

The Canteen Committee will also consider the level of prices in the Canteen. These will be maintained at the lowest level possible consistent with the twin objectives of ensuring the continuing viability of the operation and achieving a 'break-even' situation.

As regards the Library, the Canteens and the College's other accommodation problems, the VEC has followed my recommendations of 10 January that its Architect should examine these issues and prepare plans for the College's development. You are aware of the complex of factors involved in such design proposals, but the extension of Library and Canteen facilities and staff accommodation is a priority. Your proposal for the main building Canteen, based on the incorporation of the Student Common Room area in the Canteen, will be brought to the Architect's attention.

Yours sincerely,

MICHAEL O'DONNELL,  
Principal

# Student's take up Residence!

Consultant was raised but it seems the person in question has still not been contacted. No action has been taken to clear the junk out of the lower corridor and it seems the students will be forced to carry out their threat of putting the junk in the middle of Bolton St.

Neither has an Architect appeared on to examine the proposed alterations (as outlined in Mr. O'Donnell's letter). We would like to point out to students that no matter how difficult it will be to implement satisfactory alterations (we acknowledge the many difficulties) these cannot be turned down by the V.E.C. until they are put in concrete form.

To say that we are happy with the Principal's answers would be dishonest to the students. However, there are another nine weeks for the Principal to abide by the spirit of his letter. In our view three weeks have been wasted and we would remind the College authorities that the "occupation" was suspended and the students will feel justified in taking action at a future date.

**2 EDITOR: T. GRAHAM**

## Students' Reply

MEMO to Mr. O'Donnell  
from the Students' Union

15/2/'80

In regard to your letter of the 14/2/'80 we are of the opinion that this represents a significant advance on your previous letter. While it does not lay down a definite programme for completion of the planning or other stages of the expansion of the Library or Canteens we consider that it meets our demands, at least in principle. Therefore we wish to inform you that the Students' Union in General Meeting today decided to suspend the occupation for the time being.

The text of the motion passed at the General Meeting is as follows:

'This General Meeting suspends, for the time being, the occupation of the administration offices of the college on the basis of the undertakings given in Mr. O'Donnell's letter of yesterday. While no definite

dates were given for the completion of any of this work we will regard the failure to produce final plans (suitable for submission to the planning authorities and the V.E.C.) within three months from today's date as breaking the spirit of the Principal's letter. Appropriate student action will be taken at any time to ensure that the position we have fought for over the last three weeks is not whittled away.

We consider that the Library and canteens in the main building constitute the priority areas in alleviating some of the accommodation problems in the college. Also we insist that the canteen in the Linenhall is expanded at the same time as any other alterations are undertaken. Plans for these areas must be drawn up so that by next September the main building canteen and student area are refurbished and by February a substantial improvement in Library facilities are available.



# FIGHT THE CUTS!

- Education Cuts Hit Dublin V.E.C. Colleges -

The letter from the Department of Education, setting out the V.E.C. financial allocation for this year includes the following paragraph:- "I am also to say that the financial allocations now being notified are on the basis that the tuition fee increases notified in circular letter No. 34/79 are being fully implemented". In other words, put the fees up or else you won't get your full allocation!

This is the second time in two years that the Department of Education has tried to force 25% fee increases on V.E.C. students (10% for 2nd, 3rd 4th years and 25% for 1st years). Combined with fee rises and the Department of Education's financial allocation to the 20 schools and 6 Colleges in the V.E.C. in Dublin City, students and staff face severe cutbacks and increased hard-

ships next year.

On top of the education cuts the Budget alone increased inflation by about 4% so that an increase of some 20% to 21% was needed to maintain the present system without any new buildings or improvements. In fact the amount of money available to the V.E.C. has gone up from £16.8 million to £18.4 million approx. But the entire increase is in the amount available for wages of teachers which is up £1.9 million approximately.

This means that unless we force the Government to increase the money, by way of a supplementary Budget, no significant improvements in conditions in the Colleges - especially new buildings - are possible. So, more than ever before the students must get organised this year and next to fight the Government's attacks on students and the employees in the education system.

# FIGHT ANY FEE INCREASES!

## Surveyor's Strike

As most students will be aware, the Students of the Surveying department staged a strike last term in support of a student who was victimized in his examinations.

When the matter was first raised both the Department and the College

'While the employment of the new management in the canteen in the main building was not our solution to the problems there we will accept this as meeting our requirements if and only if the food is vastly improved. Otherwise we will feel justified in pressing for the employment of a Chef.

'No price increases are acceptable as long as the canteen and college authorities refuse to budget to use the 'nest-egg' to reduce prices to a minimum.

'We will take whatever action is appropriate to ensure that all the demands we have fought for are met over the next period'.

took a very bad attitude. The then Acting Principal of the College warned the Students' Union President that they wouldn't tolerate any interference by the students or staff with the 'normal' exam. procedures in the College.

The results were appealed in the normal way (although it was said that it was far too late in the year to make an appeal). The student's appeal was turned down by the Appeals Board but a special exam. was set in January for him and he passed. Furthermore, the students succeeded in getting him reinstated into the next year of the course while the appeal procedure was going on.

The lessons of this are important. The first is that in cases of injustice no matter how many are involved or how few, it is possible to unite large numbers of students to fight against discrimination. The second is that no matter what the 'official' line may be it is possible to get something reversed if we are prepared to fight.

The Surveying Department have still not sorted out a large number of the problems in this section of the college with regard to exam. time-tables etc., but if necessary the students will organise to have them stabilized in one way or another.

## T.C.D BOYCOTT

Just before going to press we received the following leaflet from Trinity students who are waging a catering boycott for over three weeks. They now face jail thro' defying the courts.

The College yesterday closed down the Junior Common Room.

A High Court injunction, sought and received by the College, prevents the occupation or use of any college premises "without permission". Immediately following yesterday's hearing in the High Court, the Board announced that the JCR was to close, forthwith.

At a meeting of the Students' Union Executive last night, it was decided that this decision of the College was an intolerable threat to the autonomy of the Students' Union, and in particular an open attempt by the College to break the Students' Union boycott.

It is absolutely clear that the intention of the College is to prevent the Students' Union from providing the alternative food services available in the JCR since the boycott began. No other basis has been offered by the College for the closure of the JCR.

The original injunction received by the College was to restrain the Students' Union from operating the JCR bar. The bar was closed on Friday, February 29th. This first injunction was confirmed in the High Court yesterday, March 5th.

The College was not, however, satisfied with the closure of the bar, and although the original concern of the College was with the breach of the law on College premises, it now became quite clear that the intention was to put a stop to all of the alternative catering services provided by the Union. There can be no other basis for the action of the College in withdrawing the Junior Common Room.

The Students Union rejects this latest intimidatory attempt by the Board to break the Students' Union boycott of catering services. Last night the Union occupied the JCR in order to ensure that catering facilities can be provided as normal. At a time when the College might be expected to enter into negotiations on the Students' Union demands on catering, they have responded with a further injunction.

We once again reaffirm the demands of the Students Union for changes in the Board's policy with regard to subsidies and for improvements and expansions in those services used by students, and call on the Board to negotiate.



# APPRENTICES & S.U.

## "Student" Cards:

Ask any apprentice in the College about the Students' Union and invariably the question of student cards (so-called) comes up. It is the subject of some resentment by apprentices and a lot of misunderstanding so let's set the record straight.

The Union of Students in Ireland is made up of the various affiliated Students' Unions from the different third-level institutions of this island, north and south. Every student who pays the capitation fee (£5. for full time students, £3. for part-time night students which is collected by the College in the fees) is a member of U.S.I., the national organisation. Apprentices do not pay capitation fees and so are not members of this national organisation. However, Bolton St. Students' Union is an autonomous organisation in its own right and every student enrolled in the college, whether full-time or part-time, day release or block release is a member of Bolton St. Students Union. This membership is not precluded by membership of a conventional trade union.

It should be pointed out that apprentices through using the Pool and Football tables and the Union shop make a major contribution to Union finances.

On the question of so called student cards the following are the facts:-

- (1) Neither U.S.I. nor its affiliated Students Unions issue membership (student) cards. Every student (including apprentices) can get a College student card, issued by the college authorities. This, however, has little value, except to proudly boast to the world at large that you are studying in this wonderful establishment.
- (2) U.S.I. is the travel company of the national organisation U.S.I. and as such is controlled by various national and international rules and regulations. It issues (for a fee of £2.50) TRAVEL CARDS to 2nd and 3rd level students and block release apprentices. They also throw in a "Countdown" card which entitles the holder to reductions in certain listed shops.
- (3) The card for the full-time people has the word "Student" printed on it (hence the confusion) and the one for block release apprentices and secondary school students has the word "scholar" (whatever that means) printed on it. The only difference is that the Scholar card holders are not entitled to reductions on trans-Atlantic flights.
- (4) Both these cards (for a fee of £2.50) can get a C.I.E. Travelsave Stamp

which entitles the holder to half fare on a one-way journey (not much good if you are going return).

- (5) Unfortunately, day-release students are not entitled to a Scholar card. This is because of the aforementioned rules and regulations governing U.S.I.T. This is something completely outside the control of both Bolton St. S.U. and U.S.I. and efforts are continuously being made to rectify this unjust situation.

Bolton St. S.U. does not encourage everyone to get a card just for the sake of having one as they are a waste of money unless they are being used for a trip abroad or substantial reductions in the listed shops.

## WHAT RELEVANCE HAS THE STUDENTS' UNION TO APPRENTICES?

A good question, especially in the light of the isolation of apprentices from the rest of the student body. This has not been helped by a certain apathy in recent years in the Union leadership and a lack of effort in the task of uniting the students and apprentices around issues of common concern like the recent "occupation" over canteen and library facilities. At least this year the effort is being made. There are undoubtedly difficult major one being the physical separation of the Linenhall from the rest of the college.

(Apprentices should reflect on the plight of another section of the college, Longford House, which is about 2 miles away!) This has led to communication difficulties which have not been helped by the attitude of the Linenhall authorities who won't allow the students to put up posters until scrutinised by the Dept. Heads. Union representatives are also forbidden to address the classes. These are blatant denials of freedom of expression and even during one breaktime this Writer, while discussing the "occupation" issue with a group of apprentices (sitting in a draughty corridor) was accused by a passing member of the staff of "poisoning" their minds!

There seems to be an attempt by certain members of the staff to blacken the S.U. and sow dissent among apprentices especially on the "student" card issue. Such attempts to divide students and apprentices should be resisted.

## HOPE FOR THE FUTURE?

What's the point in apprentices being involved in the Students Union? The most obvious answer is that the S.U. is the only defence organisation the apprentices have in the college. The trade unions for obvious practical reasons can show only limited interest

the same as apprentices. AnCO, which is supposed to oversee and protect apprentices from exploitation has often fallen down in this watchdog capacity through bureaucratic inertia. The stories of apprentices not getting proper training (e.g. spending most of their time sweeping the workshop floor) and missing out on day and block releases are endless. Things are not what they should be in the college either. Because of the V.E.C.'s policy of squeezing students into the buildings like sardines many apprentices are missing out on practical training, and have to sit around corridors at breaktimes because the canteen is too small.

All of these issues can be taken up and fought through the Students Union. On College Council (the college governing body) the Students Union President has consistently put the apprentices case on these issues. Some progress has been made. When the time and effort was taken to approach the apprentices and discuss different issues the response has generally been positive (but always laced with some justified criticisms of the Union). During the "WEEK OF ACTION" in the "Finance for Education" campaign, the vast majority of apprentices supported the boycott, despite the fact that many lost a day's pay. It should be pointed out that the boycott was called for by the national Executive of U.S.I. and not by Bolton St. Students Union and it fully accepts many of the apprentices' criticisms of this type of action. However, in the interests of unity with the rest of U.S.I. the Union decided to go ahead with the action, although we didn't think it was the most appropriate action to take.

The P.A.Y.E. march provided a rare opportunity for students, apprentices and working people to march under a common banner and protect their interests against the monied parasites of this country.

The occupation of the Administration section of the college, in protest at the poor canteen and library facilities was the most recent example of an issue of common concern. The occupation ended in success with most of our demands being met, including an assurance that in any projected extension of the Linenhall the canteen there would also be extended. Just as important as the actual results of the occupation was that in looking for the apprentices support the opportunity for some positive discussion on a variety of issues was utilised. A few apprentices joined the occupation and stayed the night on a few occasions. The message to apprentices then is clear - Apprentices should try to organise within and support the S.U. insofar as is possible. It is realised that this cannot be done during class time but there are many lunchtime meetings and apprentices, like any other students are entitled to attend and vote. Thus apprentices have a big part to play in building a strong S.U. in Bolton St.



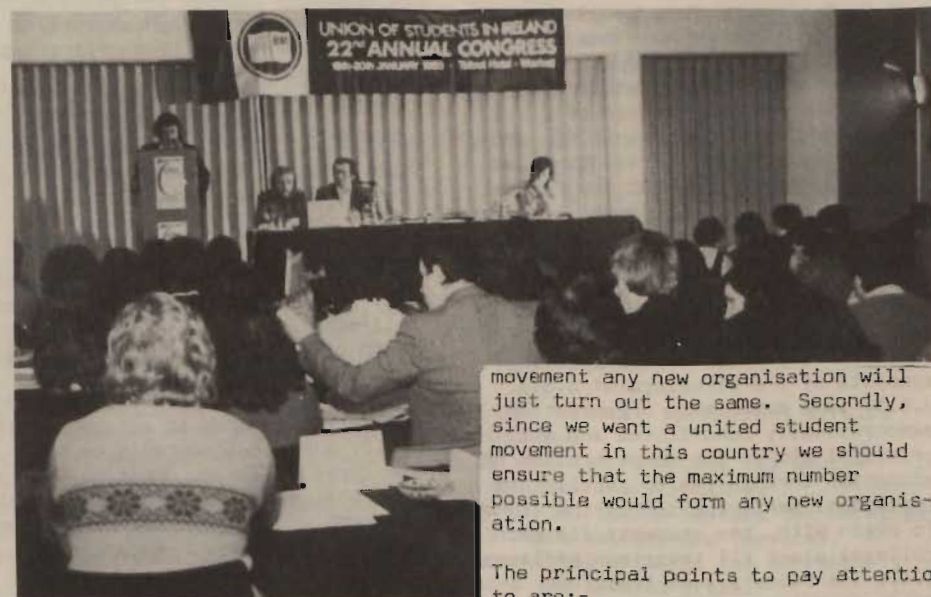
## U.S.I. MUST CHANGE!

Since its establishment 21 years ago, the Union of Students in Ireland, the national organisation of students in this country has been opposed to the genuine interests of the students in this country. While the students have desired to build the Union so that they could fight for a much improved education system and defend their members from attack, this has been at every hands turn. The reason for this is plain to see. The national Union has always been controlled by a few individuals who have used it as their own private property and a vehicle to launch their own careers, as politicians of the Fianna Fail type, or newspaper columnists, or 'peace' people.

This abuse of the students and their organisation has not gone unchallenged by the masses of students. The students have been trying for years to change the basic character of U.S.I. through the Annual Congress but through blatant manipulation and downright corruption the misleaders of U.S.I. have prevented any change taking place. This year's Congress was no exception. There are other articles on Congress in this edition of the paper, what I would like to concentrate on is the way in which the leadership ties down the students and what we have to do to radically change U.S.I.

In the first place it is necessary that we understand how the officers (and some local leaders) in U.S.I. manage to impose their will on the student movement. At Congress the Officers Report presented a mish-mash of disconnected reports on meetings that were held over the last year and a number of actions organised by them. Even though the report was very long it was little more than a 'laundry list' of events. It is this type of deceptive politics where the appearance is given that the leaders are doing "something", that is the main way in which we are kept in the dark. No attempt is made to 'critically discuss' the overall situation in the student movement or the country; to evaluate the good and bad aspects of the work done; how well the principle issues were grasped etc.

Then during the actual running of the Congress the officers led a walkout of delegates on the Saturday night from a number of Colleges in order to reduce the number below the quorum. When this failed they returned and voted against the continuation of the Congress session. This has nothing to do with openly



standing up for one's ideas, arguing the point, and then putting it to a vote. Again on the motion about the I.U.S. delegate the officers and steering committee refused to accept the ruling of the delegates for over an hour. This quite justifiably led to a walkout by the delegates (representing 2/3 of the membership of U.S.I.). Thus the undemocratic manoeuvres of the officers and steering committee - most of whom were Presidents in Colleges which followed the officers line in previous years - led to the collapse of the annual decision-making body of U.S.I.

During the canvassing for the candidates of the national officers the 'official' candidates had about 20 'hacks' working on their behalf. This included staff employees of U.S.I. who travelled the country previously to discredit the other candidates. One member of U.S.I. staff actually went to a College and told the student leaders there which motions would get passed and which wouldn't before Congress ever took place. This is corrupt and totally unacceptable! It means that the officers, in order to retain their control, use staff members in head office to influence the outcome of a supposedly democratic Congress.

What should we do about this? A number of colleges have as policy in their own Unions that they must disaffiliate from U.S.I. under certain conditions - Trinity, Ulster Polytech, Maynooth among them. These conditions now exist. But disaffiliation now is not necessarily the answer. For one thing unless the mass of students agree on a new and radically different programme for the student

Photo taken during the hustings showing Padraig Mannion speaking. He won the election for Education Officer by 78, to 71 for Brendan Doris.

movement any new organisation will just turn out the same. Secondly, since we want a united student movement in this country we should ensure that the maximum number possible would form any new organisation.

The principal points to pay attention to are:-

1. The Union exists because we need one to safeguard our interests - not for a few 'leaders'.
2. We need a good leadership that upholds sound democratic principles.
3. The unity in the student movement is not verbal or simply having everyone in the same organisation no matter how good or bad it is.
4. Unity must be based on the needs of the students first and foremost to **OPPOSE THE CUTS in EDUCATION SPENDING.**

So, we as students who understand something of the internal problems in the students' organisation must do two things:

ORGANISE the students to defend their interest and BUILD the type of democratic fighting organisation which can do this. A special Emergency Congress has been called for and takes place in April. The motions we are sending in are trying to sort out both the problems of democracy and the question of the line we should take on the cuts. Students should read the main motion (in this paper) and an opportunity will be given to discuss and amend it and the others before March 18th.

In summary U.S.I. Congress in January thus further exposed the misleaders in the organisation; weakened their hold over it and laid the ground for a more intense fight for a truly democratic and militant organisation of students, whether it is in U.S.I. or an entirely new one.

Brendan Doris.



# Future of Congress ?

What is Congress? Many people and students included do not know what Congress is i.e., its purpose and structure and in that I would also include the whole structure of U.S.I. To my mind there are many things wrong with U.S.I. and its' Annual Congress but I would also add that the foundations are sound, sound in the sense that it is a launching platform for moving forward; as time and ideas change, so must we.

Keeping that in mind throughout, I would firstly like to give a brief synopsis of the structure of U.S.I. U.S.I. is a democratic organisation, democratically constituted and its principal aim is the demonstration of education through the collective and individual participation of the students. To begin with, the students (in each college) elect (1) their own officers i.e., the Executive of their own Students Union.

(2) The class representatives and Society representatives i.e., Students Union Council (SUC).

(3) Through SUC they are delegates and Observers to Congress and they are reps. to National Council (NC).

NOTE: Each college is termed "Constituent Organisations (C.O.) and each C.O. has its own constitution and formulates its own policy.

(4) Through their representatives to Congress, the full time officers i.e.,  
President  
Deputy President  
Education Officer

and through their representatives they have a say in the formulation of policy for the National Union (U.S.I.).

National Council is comprised of, one rep. from each C.O. and the elected full-time officers. National Council is in effect the Executive decision making body of U.S.I. There are nine elected officers and they are empowered to act on behalf of U.S.I. and are answerable to N.C. There are three full-time officers (see above) who receive a salary and six part-time officers who are elected by N.C. and receive no salary. They are:-

Welfare	Vice President
National Affairs	" "
International	" "
Cultural	" "
External	" "
Sports	" "

Lastly, I would like to give an account of Congress i.e., its purpose and structure etc., and also a brief account of the changes I would like to see brought about through the awareness and participation of the students.

Congress is the supreme governing body of U.S.I. and it determines the policy of U.S.I. and gives directions to the elected officers. It is comprised of the current full-time officers and delegates nominated by and from each C.O. Each C.O. is entitled to send a minimum of two delegates, or in the case of large colleges (C.Os) a maximum of one delegate per 700 students and also a minimum of one Observer and a maximum of two Observers. A steering committee of five members elected by N.C. presides over Congress for the purpose of controlling and expediting the business on the Agenda. Visitors and the Press are also invited to Congress but only the delegates and full-time officers have voting rights. The business of Congress is conducted by means of amendments compositing sessions and plenary sessions. The amendments compositing sessions must be about the form and order of debate for each subject. Plenary sessions have policy making power, hear reports on the work done by the officers, and vote on the acceptance of their report and also debate and vote on various motions.

	Main Motions	Amendments	Emergency Motions	Total	Total Time	Time Per Motion
Education	34	20	-	54	5 1/2 hrs. 6 min.	
Welfare	14	15	-	29	3 " 6 "	
National Affairs	13	11	8	32	4 " 7.5 "	
Internat. Affairs	13	7	6	26	3 1/2 " 8 "	
Admin. and Finance	9	6	-	15	2 1/2 " 7 "	
Services	4	2	-	6		



## Our Motions

Our motion to Congress in the Welfare section of the agenda dealt with the lack of proper facilities in the V.E.C. colleges. It called for medical facilities - doctors and nurses, women's rest rooms - and adequate recreational amenities. Congress passed this motion unanimously.

Our motions on National affairs were both defeated. The motion on the economy called on the students to oppose any attempt by the government to tax social welfare benefits.

to support the PAYE workers struggles against the government and for the students to unite with the workers to obtain major concessions from the state. This amendment was first of all passed by about 10 votes and then defeated by 10 votes after a recount.

The second national affairs motion called for a new policy in U.S.I. on the northern situation. But the officers spoke against it and overal from the discussion it was obvious that our position was correct. There is little understanding of the issue and there should be more open discussion on the issue and new policy brought out that has the support of the students.

An emergency motion was submitted by us under this section dealing with the arrest and detention of Máirtín Mac Aí Ghóill and the government and police forces attack on students under the Offences Against the State Act. It was passed unanimously.

Under International affairs we submitted two motions. One dealt with the Arms race, condemning the two superpowers and calling on Congress to support the struggles of people everywhere in the fight for self-determination and total control over their own affairs. It was passed by a large majority.

Our remaining motions on the Palestinian question, and on the student travel company were not dealt with due to lack of time.

(article based upon report by J. Millet, delegate to Congress).



Average time per motion or part of 7 minutes. A copy of the Officers report is also sent out to each C.O. and this is a report on the work done by the officers for the year.

Each C.O. is entitled to send in eight motions as follows:-

1. Education
2. Welfare
3. National Affairs
4. International Affairs
5. Administration and Finance
6. Services

Plus two additional motions on any of the above, also each C.O. may submit any number of amendments to their motions and also emergency motions which do not have to be in by any specified time. The latest date for receipt of motions for this Congress was 9th Nov. 1979 and for amendments 30th Nov. The motion and amendments are then composited i.e., sorted out and grouped under the above headings to give the final Agenda which is then sent out to all C.O.s usually before Xmas. The latest date for Appeals against the way the motions were composited was the 24th November. Also, the latest date for submitting nominations for the full-time posts was the 14th December. Below is a table of the amount of motions etc., submitted for Congress just past, the time for each session and also for each motion or part of it should be taken into consideration, also, that many of the motions were divided into 2 or 3 parts etc.

Congress is run over a week-end in January and this year Congress was held between the 18th - 20th of January 1980 in the Talbot Hotel in Wexford.

My criticism of U.S.I. Congress, I hope is of a constructive nature, building on the ready made foundations and of a destructive nature. My criticisms are:

- (1) There are too many motions to be debated and voted on; there just is not enough time as can be seen from the table. Many of the motions are lengthy and in parts.
- (2) Congress is held too early in the year i.e., the motions have to be in by November 9th, giving only about six weeks for each C.O. to get on its feet after the summer recess etc.
- (3) Not enough time between receiving the final Agenda and Congress for a lengthy and serious debate on the motions in each C.O. so that the students can mandate their delegation to vote for or against each motion.
- (4) The officers report coming out so late prevents any debate (we received one copy on the 16th January, just two days before Congress) on the work done by the officers for the year.
- (5) The lack of facilities and time for informal debates and discussions between the delegation from all the C.O.'s on the motions as there just isn't enough time at Congress to debate fully each motion etc.

Basically the changes I would like to see would be:-

- (a) 1st Friday in December - latest date for submitting motions.
- 1st Friday in February - latest

date for submitting amendments.  
3rd Friday in December - An informal Congress whereby delegation can discuss and debate the motions.  
2nd Friday in March - Congress 'Proper' with a minimum amount of debate the maximum amount of voting on all the motions.

NOTE: Congress never gets through all the motions because of the amount of time spent on debate.

- (b) The officers issue reports under the headings below giving an account of their work, achievements and failures, what policy is needed to achieve results; in effect make recommendations and give guidelines on the major issues that face USI with the view that all C.O.'s could use their reports as a basis for their motions.

National Affairs: (a) Current affairs  
(b) Economy.

Education: (a) Financing (b) Course Content etc. (c) structure.

Welfare: (a) Social Welfare and Services

(b) Student Welfare and Services,  
International affairs: (a) current affairs (b) special areas.

Student Org: (a) Student Unions (b) National Union Services; travel and insurance.

Administration; accounts

Women's Rights; Conditions and law.

If you think I've left anything out or if you disagree with these views I would be willing to meet and discuss your views etc.

Fergal Quigley C/46/02

## Motions

The two most controversial motions discussed at Congress were those concerning a) Abortion and b) the I.U.S. (International Union of Students).

The abortion motion which was proposed by Carysfort was passed, after much debate, with one section being omitted. As a result of this, U.S.I.'s policy on abortion is that "every human being has the right to life from the moment of conception". This does not contradict policy formulated last year which says that those who have abortions should not be treated as criminals. The part of this year's motion which was rejected read as follows "if life is deliberately denied from any citizen, it should be considered as murder and the crime treated as such".

The second abortion motion proposed by U.C.C. was not voted upon.

The first I.U.S. motion to be considered was one calling for the disaffiliation of U.S.I. from I.U.S. The debate which followed was shorter than anticipated but quite informative. I.U.S. appears to be a pro Soviet organisation

and appears to be funded by countries such as East Germany. There are only 4 Western European countries that are members.

The N.U.S. (U.K.) (National Union of Students) (U.K.) have already withdrawn some time ago and it is said that the only reason we have remained in is because of the association the leadership of U.S.I. has with Sinn-Féin the Workers' Party.

During the vote many colleges went with the leadership to defeat the motion. It has also been suggested that some delegates abstained rather than vote for the motion so that the second motion concerning I.U.S. could be discussed.

It was pointed out by Brendan Doris that the I.U.S. Rep. was mandated to work against any pro Soviet moves within the organisation, which he was not doing. For this reason we supported the 2nd motion which called for the election of the Rep. by Congress rather than him being handpicked by the officers and being totally under their control.

After a lengthy debate the vote was taken and the results were 78 for, 35 against and 12 abstentions. A 2/3 majority of those voting was needed in

order to make the necessary changes in the constitution to allow the Representative to be elected at Congress. Clearly this 2/3s clause was satisfied but the Chair refused to accept this and decided to count those who had abstained from voting as having voted. This meant that the motion would be defeated. It became clear that the Chair was biased towards the officers who didn't want the motion passed. This led to a mass walk out.

Afterwards it was learned that in order that the motion should pass 50% of all those entitled to vote should vote for it. In my view this would be 50% of a number made up of (a) those within the hall (b) those not actually present at the time of voting and (c) those delegates who were entitled to be present at Congress but who did not actually turn up.

When this is taken into consideration it is clear that the motion was not passed. This in no way, however, pardons the Chair with regards to their initial biased stand.

This episode highlights how red tape can be used by a minority to defeat the purpose of any democratic organisation.



# TAG MASS-TRANSPORT FOR DUBLIN

There have been some hopeful developments in the field of Public Transport recently. Dublin City Councillor, Mr. Jim Mitchell, has proposed a 'FREE BUS MONTH' to encourage people out of their cars and onto buses and trains, while the new Minister of Transport, Mr. Albert Reynolds, has indicated in a recent speech and radio interview his intention to give the bus priority and remove the 'unrestricted use of cars for travel to work'.

The Free-bus month is a very good idea, well worthy of implementation. All journeys within the inner-city area (marked on map) would be free, while commuter journeys to and from this area would be reduced in price. For it to be successful however, it must be properly planned. It would be pointless to simply reduce fares and then block buses from easy access to the city. A comprehensive system of bus lanes on all major routes will be needed to enable buses to flow easily. Travel times would be halved and this, added to cheaper fares, would create the incentive to get a lot of people onto buses with the consequences of a better environment, a better Dublin and a massive saving on imported fuel and road building costs.

All this could be achieved without the introduction of new laws, all that is needed is the cooperation of all concerned; C.I.E., Dublin Corporation, the Gardai and the Department of Transport and the Environment. There has been very little cooperation to date between these bodies and none of them have shown any enthusiasm for the free-bus month, including C.I.E., the main beneficiary.

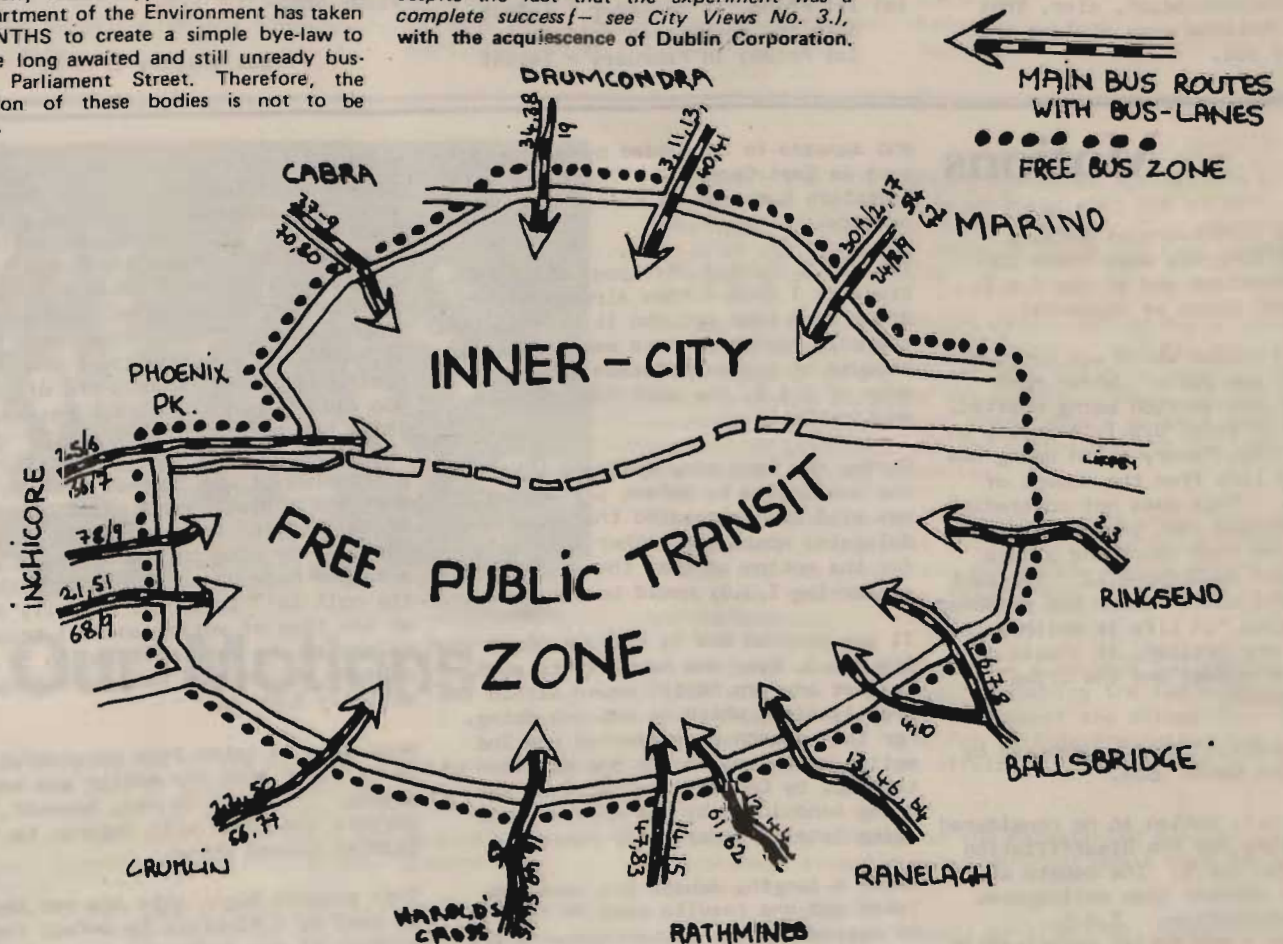
Road-building for the private car seems to be the main preoccupation of Dublin Corporation and the provision of any kind of facilities for public transport is not in their interests, indeed many would say, is anathema to them. The Department of the Environment has taken SIX MONTHS to create a simple bye-law to allow the long awaited and still unready bus-lane in Parliament Street. Therefore, the cooperation of these bodies is not to be expected.

This is where the Minister for Transport, Mr. Reynolds, could activate the required spirit to get this excellent idea off the ground. His recent speech and his radio interview suggests that he will introduce controls on cars sufficient to discourage people from driving into the city, and priority measures to speed buses. Mr. Reynolds describes our absurdly high proportion of car to bus commuting as a 'grossly inefficient use of road space and an unacceptable waste of precious fuel'. The Minister is new to the job and although, he has not made any specific proposals or promises, the only test of his spoken intentions is the achievement of a proper public transport system and the saving of Dublin from our Local Authorities' road proposals. The Transport Action Group will observe closely, and report on any progress, or lack of it in this field, and we wish the Minister success in the difficult tasks ahead.

On cue, of course, has come the reaction from the road lobby. Mr. Ray O'Donoghue of the Automobile Association has been first, so far, to criticise Mr. Reynolds' remarks. The A.A. proclaims the rights of every one of the city's 190,000 cars to penetrate to every corner of the city at any possible time and laments the non-completion of Dublin and Dun Laoghaire Corporations' and Dublin County Council's massive road plans. Mr. O'Donoghue claims that the Local Authorities of many other cities have been forced to abandon experimental restriction on private vehicles in city centres. I am sure that the Administrations of such cities as Florence, Stockholm, Munich, and many others would be very surprised to hear of Mr. O'Donoghue's theories as private vehicle restriction has been, is being and will continue to be an integral part of urban planning in these cities and is working well. It will be remembered that our only experiment with bus priority in Dublin at Fairview in 1971 was killed off under pressure from the road lobby despite the fact that the experiment was a complete success (see City Views No. 3.), with the acquiescence of Dublin Corporation.

Dublin is today the only city of one million people in Europe with absolutely no priorities for buses anywhere, absolutely no facilities for cyclists, absolutely no restrictions on private transport, absolutely no properly pedestrianised streets. To walk or cycle in Dublin requires the skills of an acrobat, to travel by bus, the patience of Job. The A.A., and the road lobby generally, will have to realise that Dublin is no longer just a small town but a major city and the capital of the country. The parochial attitudes which they espouse, and Dublin Corporation implement, have got to go. When will these organisations realise that continuing to use the car for every possible trip is not alone destroying our bus system, but is also hindering those drivers who must use the roads, such as emergency services, delivery and people who need cars in the course of their business (not just to and from work). This attitude is also destroying the inner city by building new roads and present road widening, while noise and air pollution are making life a misery for its residents. The car has an important place in any transport hierarchy, but we must control it and not have it controlling us, as is the situation in this city at present.

Too many reports and studies have been produced, too much talking has gone on. The situation is critical and the time to do something is NOW. The free-bus month should be planned and implemented immediately with a proper system of bus-lanes and bus-only streets, plus the provision of a cycleway system and the pedestrianisation of the MAJORITY of the downtown shopping and residential streets. It is up to the Minister, Mr. Reynolds to get this moving, but it is also up to you, the readers of this piece, to push for its introduction by writing to Councillors, T.D.s, the newspapers, radio and television and to us. - TAG at 19 Smithfield, Dublin 7.





**COMPASS :** A compass is not necessary for beginners. The recommended one for orienteering is the "Silva" compass which ranges in price from £3.00 - £10.00. The club has a number of compasses which members may use.

**WHISTLE:** A whistle must be brought as a safety precaution.

**WATCH & PEN:** A watch is useful and a biro or waterproof marker is essential.

See the list on our Noticeboard just

outside the library; a typical orienteering map is also displayed there along with additional information on orienteering.

#### How to Join the Club:

If you want to get out of the Dublin smog and into the fresh air of county Wicklow every fortnight or so, then come along to one of the Club's meetings (look out for our posters) or contact John Duggan, the Club Secretary, who is usually to be found in C.22 or C.23

## I think we've got us a Con-boy!

There is a decidedly bad odour in the air. It is interpreted by some semi-knowing nostrils as "Citizen's Band" (C.B.) and it is growing markedly stronger in Ireland.

Over the past years and particularly during the latter six months of 1979, there has been a noticeable increase in the number of people acquiring and operating C.B. sets.

C.B. radios can now be bought quite easily in a number of Dublin shops for as little as £150. Indeed, advertisements offering C.B. equipment and its related accessories are to be found regularly in the Dublin evening newspapers.

C.B. operation has become something of a cult among its devotees. To many people it is a novelty. The whole idea of actually being "on the air" transmitting and receiving messages to their fellow operators seems to give them immense pleasure. Most C.B. units can broadcast up to a 20 - 30 mile radius.

Operators have developed their own coded language which enhances the "excitement". The conversations carried on between users are all too often monotonous and boring and the chances of hearing or partaking in an intelligent discussion are almost nil.

Jargon tends to dominate the transmissions "breaker-breaker" 10 - 4, "over and out" "chicken box" being typical examples of the rather dull transmissions.

The use of C.B. radios for transmitting is illegal in this country. A considerable amount of radio interference, much of which is deliberate, is being caused to licensed users by other sources". There is no evidence, so far, to support some views that deliberate interference is being caused by licensed stations.

It is the unlicensed operator and the indiscriminate sales of transmitters/receivers, C.B.s to those persons that must be stopped. It is essential that a measure of control be introduced to stop sales to non licensed holders.

Any one may purchase a transmitter/receiver without any formality whatsoever simply by paying cash over the counter.

The situation at the moment is that members of the public are quite openly being encouraged to break the law! Purchasers of C.B. units could find themselves before the Courts. Organisations or individuals that encourage others to break the law are aiding and abetting. But where does the responsibility lie? Is it the manufacturer, advertiser, publisher or retailer. Certainly, the purchaser will suffer if he breaks the law, but let's be realistic, the legalisation of C.B. would bring many difficulties.

The problems include when? where? and how? Which frequencies are to be involved? what power allowed? the cost, types of emission, what equipment? Interference considerations also cause concern. This has reached very serious proportions in both Germany and the U.S.A.

What about overcrowding? If one takes a crude rule of thumb by comparing the U.S.A. with the U.K. somewhat alarming figures result. In America there are approx. 10,000,000 C.B. users and some 250,000 to 270,000 fully licensed amateurs or hams. Thus, the ratio of C.B. users to amateurs is 40 : 1. If the same ratio were projected for the U.K. it would mean 800,000 C.B. users all packed into a 0.25 MHz bandwidth. The situation would become a radio frequency madhouse - unless action is taken.

Other problems are even more serious and could affect Irish workers, people not even interested in C.B. Think - if a C.B. opened in Ireland there would be a huge demand for low-priced walkie talkie type equipment. Imagine the sheer volume of sets required. Now think of all the individual components used to manufacture these sets. Good, this would mean more work for Ireland in producing the goods, more work, more jobs, right? Wrong! The Japanese for one have already proved themselves masters in the areas of marketing this type of equipment and the design and manufacture of it in large volume. Thus, a C.B. in Ireland could offer big business to overseas manufacturers, no increase in employment for Ireland but a big increase in our import bills.

Citizen's Band may come. Will we learn from the mistakes of other countries or will we, through lack of sensible preparation, blunder in and make exactly the same mistakes all over again?

Let us make sound preparations now and let the Government and its relative departments recognise that they have a clear duty to plan the event properly.

Isn't that why we voted these people into Government - or have I got democracy all wrong?

EUGENE J. MacM

## Trad. Group

A Folk and Traditional Group have been a part of the Music Society for the last two years. The Group is made up of students from different courses in the college who came together with the intention of sharing a common interest and learning from each other.

There is a meeting 3 times a week in Room A51. A meeting usually means a session where everyone joins in and lash out common tunes and songs. Last year the Group were successful in organising a couple of Folk Concerts: the Kinema but this year our time has been occupied in organising a program which we will be entering in the Galway RTC Music Festival.

Last year one of the prizes in this competition was won by Michael O'Hall who is a final year engineering student in Bolton Street. Michael is entering again this year along with five other members of the Folk Group. The theme chosen this year is a presentation of tunes and songs which crept into the Irish tradition as a result of Irish participation in the Napoleonic Wars.

New members are welcome to call to A5 most lunch-hours.

## Longford House

They said it couldn't be done but it has been done. Longford House have finally got their tea-rooms despite every conceivable set-back.

The demand for a tea-room in Longford House goes back about seven years. Since that time they have been building these tea-rooms and eventually, although it took longer than the Irish Life complex, they have been finished and are now in operation.

The main purpose of the tea-rooms at the moment is just to serve tea, coffee, light snacks etc., and to do this purpose they are quite well suited. Although quite small the area is quite well laid out, is clean and bright.

This all leads to it having a nice cosy atmosphere, most suited to its purpose. The only snag is the prices which, like the main building, should be lower especially for tea and coffee.

**COMMENTS: B. STONE**



# Revolution in Iran

It is over a year since the extraordinary popular revolution overthrew the corrupt monarchy of the Shah and paved the way for a republic which was to be moulded by Ayatollah Khomeini as "Islam's Republic." But, apart from frequent media news of the four months old saga of the hostaged U.S. embassy staff in Tehran, there have been few unbiased reports of that nationalistic revolution.

In Iran, for a quarter of a century people had to put up with a Dictatorship and systematic persecution, during which time (as it is now being openly revealed) torture and murder by the Shah's secret police, SAVAK, claimed thousands of lives. Meanwhile, the natural resources of the country were either squandered or at best criminally mismanaged. Although rich in oil (having been the oldest oil producer and exporter in the Middle East), but in every other respect, Iran has remained sadly underdeveloped, to the extent that today it is desperately dependant for many things, most important its basic food, on foreign imports. And such was the background to the frustration of millions of people which turned into a universal fervour for destroying that cancerous monarchy, in the hope of establishing a democratic and responsible state.

But Nationalism is one thing, fanaticism another and thus, one man's rigid ambitions has overridden the aspirations of the millions. Of course, Ayatollah Khomeini, who up to the revolution had already been one of the few top spiritual and religious leaders for years, from the uprising of 1978 became the undisputable leader of the revolution. This was mainly due to his previous vocal opposition to the Shah (among his fellow Ayatollahs, who over the years, had remained generally silent) was instrumental in the rebellion of 1963 and his subsequent fourteen years of exile. Hence, so far as the charismatic Ayatollah Khomeini represents the national pride of the Iranian masses, he will be supported and upheld in the light of foreign threat, such as the United States, even if it is over the desperate and unreasonable seizure of that country's embassy staff. Although in this episode, the people's humiliated emotions have been awoken by memories of the C.I.A.'s active role in the Anglo-American coup of 1953 which toppled the nationalist Premier, Dr. Massadeq and brought back the imposition of the greedy and degenerate Pahlavi's dynasty against the will of the people.

## Embassy Occupation

The occupation of the U.S. embassy came about mainly as the result of increasing inability and desperation of any one effective governmental body (let alone the clergy) to run the country.

After the revolution, as had been feared, the country went berserk. Gradually, there came a breakdown of the fragile transitional Cabinet of Mr. Bazargan and the ugly rise of anarchy. Even orders issued by Khomeini, frequently did not get to their destinations, while thieves, bandits and extremists groups felt increasingly at liberty to rob, kill and terrorise in the name of the Islamic revolution. Furthermore, there has been a continuing skyrocketing inflation, shortages of essential commodities and a very serious unemployment problem (up to 1/5th of the ten million total workforce) due to the exodus of thousands of factory owners, managers and foreign firms.

Consequently, amid the rapid cynicism and disenchantment with the leadership of the clergy, the militant students takeover of the U.S. embassy was a blessing in disguise for the Ayatollahs, since this action gave fresh opportunity for mass mobilisation and emotional demonstrations (hence diversion of expectations) all over the country but after four months of repetitive rhetoric the revolutionary clergy council has yet to prove to have mastered the modern complexities (apart from the immediate resolving of the embassy seizure) of running the country properly, that is beyond sweeping the most pressing problems under the prayer rug.

## The New Ruling Class

After one year of the revolution, the clergy, nonetheless, can feel self-congratulatory. They have turned the Shah's Foundation into a Foundation for the needy as well as making rates, electricity and water free to the poor. To appease the left, they have nationalised the banking and insurance companies. Ironically, the last action has created its own chaos which is a reflection of the whole situation.

But the disillusionment still persists, while society is witnessing the emergence of the new ruling class or "Ayatocracy". Overnight people were installed in key posts in the revolutionary administration of the State, whose main qualifications have been an abundance of loyalty for the Ayatollahs. The country has been operated, not on the basis of any rational methods or economic theories but grimly on some untried and rigid fundamentalist view of Islam, requiring direct interference of the clergy.

This is now all enshrined in the new constitution which allows for a "Velayat - Fagih" (government by the expert in divine law). This concept is acceptable only in Shia Islam (to which 90 of population belongs) but within Shia, it is advocated only

Ayatollah Khomeini as his personal doctrine. This concentrates the highest powers (above the President) in the hands of the Fagih, and so is leading to the supremacy of the clergy (hence the phrase : Ayatocracy).

The Khomeini's Islamic Ideology not only strongly opposes the West as a "lost and corrupt civilisation", but also denounces the communist regimes for clearly being athiestic. Thus, the only party close to Khomeini is the main Islamic Republican Party (I.R.P.) which is at the right wing of the Saky political spectrum and does rally, by far, the largest number of followers. The second party on the right, which has been less radical and much smaller, is the Muslim People's Republican Party (MRP) and has mostly the support of Azarbaijani's (from the North-West Province) who uphold Ayatollah Shariatmadari as their religious leader.

On the left, there are two main Partys. one is the "Mojahadeen Khalg" which seeks to synthesis Islam with Socialism and it supposedly has the support of the President Bani-Sadr. The other is the "Fadayeen Khalg", a Marxist-Leninist Party which openly opposes the Islamic constitution and Khomeini as its supreme head of state.

After frequent violent clashes between the IRP and MRP supporters, the latter was dissolved on the order of Khomeini. In the centre, the Liberals and other moderate intellectuals such as Mr. Bazargan (the transitional government Premier who resigned after the occupation of the U.S. embassy) are too inhibited in the present mass hysteria to rally with their minority supporters.

In the meantime the radical rightwing followers of I.R.P. frequently and ruthlessly continue to attack, as they have done before, not only the leftist parties, but any opposition groups, on the pretext of destroying anti-revolutionary plottings. These extremist mobs, with their fascistic behaviour are sadly reminiscent of the days of the Shah. They are mostly made up of senseless, crazy, bullyboys, known as the "Hezbollahis" (of God's Party). Just recently, in protest against the continuing violent attacks on the students in Tehran University (the largest and always one of the principal centres of opposition to the Shah), its' Principal and entire governing body resigned. Similar protest actions have also been taken, for similar reasons, in the provincial Universities of Mashad and Shiraz.

Finally, it would still be too early to suggest (that is before the freeing of the U.S. embassy staff and the eventual-ity of the Tribunal's hearing for the Shah's condemnation) that the mystery of the clergy's rule will be overtaken by some familiar system of government.



# MOTION TO U.S.I. CONGRESS

## Finance for Education

### Congress Angrily Denounces:

The further massive cuts, by the British and southern Irish governments, in education and other social spending.

These cuts which are part and parcel of the policy of the two governments to force the working people - industrial workers, small farmers and unemployed - to bear the burden of the deepening economic crisis. In particular the cuts in education will cause increasing hardships for students and all those employed in the education system.

### Congress Asserts that:

The workers, students and small producers, especially those on the land, must oppose the cuts on the basis that the crisis, for which they are being made to pay, is a crisis of profitability of the financial institutions and monopoly industrial enterprises. The economic crisis has not, in any way, been caused by the peoples' struggles for the necessities of life or their demands for necessary social services of which education is one and it is completely unjust for the working people to be made pay for it.

The crisis is world-wide, in all the capitalist countries, including the two most powerful - the U.S.A. and the Soviet Union - and is the direct product of the capitalist system itself.

The crisis derives directly from the anarchistic method of capitalist production; from the competition for markets between the two super-powers and the power-blocks they head: their search for maximum profit and the entire trend of monopolisation of capital which stops at nothing including annexation of whole countries. This is the cause of the danger to world peace and is seriously threatening to involve the peoples of the whole world in world war.

### Congress maintains that:

The cuts in education, as well as other areas of public spending are being imposed by the Government to solve the effect of the capitalist crisis in Ireland. Therefore, the students in Ireland do not have any real prospect of wringing any concessions from the British and southern Irish Governments without resolutely waging a sustained, serious and consistent fight against both states' economic policies.

This fight must be on the basis that:

1. The governments are the governments of the rich and exploitative sections of the society. They actively assist the maximisation of the profits of this section at the expense of the working people, through wage controls, cuts in social spending, inflation etc. These are the means by which the burden of the economic crisis is passed onto the working people. Concessions can only be wrung from such governments by consistent opposition and not by having any faith in "their concern for education".
2. Support for and alliance with all other sections of the people who are fighting the cuts especially the industrial workers, state employees and small farmers. This alliance is not only necessary because the students demands for a just and equitable education can only be met with the complete overthrow of the capitalist system for one, which genuinely serves the interests and needs of the working people; but also because this alliance constitutes a serious force which makes the students' struggles more powerful and provides maximum opportunity for its success.

### Congress therefore Cautions that:

The cuts in education are not a departure by the present governments from the policies of previous governments. The cuts have been taking place in many ways, both overt and covert, for many years but especially since the onset of the latest international crisis of capitalism in 1974/'75.

It is important for students to note that:

In the main, all improvements in education [such as the expansion of the technological sector, in the south, in the 60's and early 70's] have always been at the behest of the monopoly industrialists and bankers and the state administration. The goal of industry and financial institutions is to make maximum profits and the capitalist states' role, in all of this, is to facilitate this search for profits by providing huge grants, tax concessions, infrastructure and trained personnel. Thus, the education system, as they exist in Ireland, at the moment, only coincidentally have anything in common with the needs of the students or the working people of this country. The education system is so organised as to maintain the status quo and is

not, in any way, setting out to reduce the foreign dependent nature of the Irish economies or provide for the cultural and social needs of the people as its first premise.

### Congress therefore Declares that:

The main programme of the Union of Students in Ireland in the immediate future is to organise its members to "fight the cuts".

U.S.I. and all its constituent organisations must wherever possible support the day-to-day struggles of the working people, with leaflets on their struggles, posters in support, meetings etc., and to seek the support of the workers for our own specific demands.

### Congress Revises:

The former programme of U.S.I. which is embodied in the slogans:

- (a) "Democratisation of Education".
- (b) "Education is a right not a privilege".
- (c) "Access to Education" (meaning for the working class).

For, while we should make education genuinely democratic and ensure that the ordinary people are brought into third level education (by breaking down the financial barriers and improving primary and secondary education), these slogans can NEVER achieve these just demands.

How can we make education more democratic or enable the children from working class backgrounds to get third-level education except by FIGHTING THE GOVERNMENT'S CUTS IN EDUCATION? How can we broaden educational opportunity and give real democratic life to the students without mobilising the students to demand the EXPANSION OF STATE SPENDING ON EDUCATION?

The problem with the existing slogans "Democratisation of Education", "Education is a Right not a Privilege", "Access to Education", is that they are liberal and reformist slogans. What we need are fighting demands which are the only way to achieve those aims which we all want to see realised.

So these slogans will be replaced by the following programme:

- A. "Fight the Cuts in Education Spending".
- B. "Make the Rich Pay for State Education".
- C. "College Education for the Working People".

By adopting these slogans we are adopting a programme which can REALISTICALLY advance the goals which we all desire for a more democratic education system, because they embody a definite demand



that the Government should drop its policy of education cuts, and should continue and escalate the expansion of the education system and thereby improve the quality of existing facilities and to expand them to include places for as many of the children of the working people as desire third-level education.

Congress therefore Mandates the Officers to:

Implement the programme above by developing suitable tactics to force the governments to concede the demands of the students and people for adequate finance for the education system.

This is to include:

- (a) Actions of solidarity with all other sections of the working people in the fight against the cuts and for other reforms such as the PAYE struggle.
- (b) Open support of a practical nature for the workers struggles where the most important thing is that the issue is just rather than whether these struggles are declared "official" or not.
- (c) Mobilising the students for an assault on the governments' policies through regional conferences, rallies which have as their main aim the explanation of the nature of the struggle and the building of unity amongst the student masses.
- (d) Leading sustained actions which are directed against the Governments in the first place through such tactics as frequent (once a week) and unannounced (to the state) demonstrations for a period of four to six weeks at a time; week-end rallies in public parks and squares, with a programme of meetings, speeches, discussions and leafletting; a countrywide campaign to take our case to the working people by means of good factual leaflets and postering.

This motion will be discussed and amended.

## Students hard hit by bicycle thefts

Every day, almost without exception, some students or staff members has a car stolen or vandalised; or their bicycle or motorbike lifted.

This happens both outside and inside the college's official parking areas. This is not a tolerable situation.

The Insurance companies simply make lots of money from this state of affairs since fully comprehensive insurance is beyond most peoples' pockets. The college either can't or won't insure against such theft on its' property. The Gardai will spare no expense on protecting the property of the banks, even using the army for this purpose since it is in this area that large losses are suffered by insurance companies and the State. But when it comes to the personal property of the individual, provided you are not a millionaire, the Gardai seem to have no trouble putting parking tickets on cars but little of this effort goes into protecting the same cars from theft.

The following preventative or insurance measures can be taken:-

1. Install in your car an alarm system.
2. Chain securely front and rear wheels, including the frame, to railings or better still in bicycle park.
3. Insure bicycles and motorbikes for theft through Progressive Insurance - the Insurance Co. of the Union of Students in Ireland.
4. Extra insurance cover over and above your own policy can be obtained from P.M.P.A. through their (exploitative) 'new' scheme.

These things are well known already but some people don't take precautions although everybody is well aware of the type of society we live in.

It has been discovered that one of the techniques, used by the bicycle thieves is to put an extra lock on somebody's bicycle so that they can come back and steal it at night from the bicycle sheds. A chain is no guarantee of protection since a bolt cutters will cut through most types available. The stealing of cars seems to be for the purpose of "fun rides" and plain vandalism; while bicycles are stolen for money in an organised way. (Incidentally, many hundreds of bicycles are recovered and kept in Kevin St. Garda Station and never reclaimed. They are auctioned off twice a year. Look there first! A record of your bicycle number helps.

It seems that the culprits are mainly local youth who work in groups of three to seven and have attacked both Porters and students who challenge them. They range in age from 9 - 19 or so. The problem is part of the overall problem of the anti people nature of the society we live in. The answer is not to simply beat up a number of these youth since for one thing it might start a campaign of terror against the students in the college; and for another it isn't enough. It is, however, entirely justified to vigorously oppose the thieves even giving a good thrashing to anyone caught stealing - but this has to be combined with an attempt to unite with the people living around the college in the flat complexes.

The young people, especially, are largely denied education; see the college as a State institution of the rich (which it is!); are constantly being attacked and harassed by the Gardai and are resentful against the conditions of unemployment etc., which is their lot. It would be a mistake to beat up some kids purely and simply since they would see no difference between this and what the Gardai do. It has to be explained to them (and the local people) why such a thing has happened - beforehand. Also, we have to make the youth see that there is a big difference between the bike of a student and the Rolls of a millionaire. The theft of the first is not acceptable while the latter doesn't bother any decent person since millionaires are the real parasites in this society that cause the problems we are suffering from.

To tackle the issue we must break down the isolation of the college from the local community. This does not mean "do-goody" social work but a genuine programme of working with the local people on all sorts of issues such as their housing needs, recreations, education etc.

The writer of this article suggests that a first step would be for a number of students to get together and write a leaflet explaining our view on the thefts and the overall problem. This should also mention the fact that if it continues the culprits will be punished and not by calling the Gardai either. A local meeting with the people should be called in the college to discuss the issue.

LAYOUT :  
NEIL SWORDS.

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